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PECK'S POEM
ON
UNIVERSALISM.



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OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES



A
SHORT POEM,

CONTAINING A DESCANT ON THE

UNIVERSAL PLAN.

ALSO,

LINES

ON THE HAPPY END OF THE RIGHTEOUS,

AND

PROSPERITY AND DEATH OF THE RICH MAN,

SPOKEN OF IN SAINT LUKE'S GOSPEL, CHAPTER XVI.

BY JOHN PECK.

Days should speak, and years teach wisdom. I also will show mine opinion.
Job xxxii. 7 and 10.

Fourth Edition....With a Preface.

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P R E F A C E .

The following pages are a reprint of an old pamphlet, 'printed and sold, April, 1813.' It is presumed that they contain an expression of the views of one JOHN PECK, on the subject of Universal Salvation; or, as he styles it, 'The Universal Plan.' It appears to have passed through three editions at least, that printed in April, 1813, being the third. Whether that is the last one in that form or no, there is probably now no means of ascertaining. We have been informed that it was printed entire, about thirty years ago, in a religious newspaper, in this city.

When it was written, or by whom, seems now to be a problem somewhat difficult of solution; for we have made very considerable exertions to ascertain the fact, besides writing to a number of gentlemen bearing the name of Peck, but have not been able to learn anything of our author; and it is, to say the least, a question whether 'John Peck' is a veritable person, or whether it is not an anonymous signature. Be that as it may, it is evidently the work of *somebody*, and of somebody who took a deep interest in the questions which engaged the attention of the Church in his day; one who 'thought, and spake what came of thinking;'

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whose words were quaintly uttered, perhaps sometimes even roughly. We will add, in this connection, that we have a faint recollection of having heard, many years ago, that the author was a farmer in the State of Vermont, but that impression is exceedingly vague and uncertain.

Quotations from 'Peck' are frequently met with in the works of Orthodox writers on the doctrine of Universal Salvation, showing that its arguments were considered of some value in the discussion. It does certainly contain a number of fair hits, and its reasoning is forceful and to the point. The style thereof, we presume, will be counted not the highest in the 'divine art,' if it be not by some actually called doggerel. But then it will be observed that our poet claims for it nothing higher. He was evidently an unlettered man, as his imperfect English abundantly testifies. We have printed it *verbatim*, for we think it fitting that the author should tell his own story in his own language.

The copy from which this is printed was found in the library of S. G. DRAKE, Esq., and was kindly loaned by him for the purpose.

Besides the main poem, there are two shorter ones by Mr. Peck, and one entitled 'Thoughts on Universalism, by a different author,' though we think it bears the impress of the same mind. We have also added two short pieces from Dr. Watts, merely to 'make out the form.'

P O E M S .

What if the author is no bard,
But writes a dogg'rel song ;
What if the muse her aid refuse,
While he doth creep along ?

The squalling winds may clear the air,
And drive the fog away ;
My grov'ling rhymes may hit the times,
And truth and light convey.

A cobbler works, a quack would ride,
And noddies often dream ;
A clown will walk, a babbler talk,
And I pursue my theme.

Huzza! brave boys — loud be our joys,
Your sins shall be forgiven;
O! skip and sing, our God and King
Will bring us all to heaven.

Repent we may, reform and pray;
If not, all will be well;
For, do our worst we shan't be curst,
Nor can we get to hell.

What if we live and die in sin?
Grace will abound the more;
Justice, though bold, dares not take hold,
For Christ has paid the score.

O! charming news to live in sin,
And die to reign with Paul;
'T is so indeed, for Jesus bled
To save the devil and all.

Some think the just alone reach heaven;
But all who curse and swear,
And lie and steal, get drunk and kill,
Find safe admittance there.

But can such naked souls as these
Angelic honors hold ?
O yes ! they wear white raiment there,
And walk in streets of gold.

'T is there God gives to every knave
A bright and radiant crown ;
'T is there they eat ambrosia sweet,
And swill the nectar down.

There the black devil will ascend,
And walk with God in white,
When he through age has lost his rage,
And flung out all his spite.

We know 't is well to keep from vice,
But sin nobody kills ;
Gabriel himself will all escort
To Zion's blooming hills.

None but a foolish fanatic,
Of weak and simple brains,
Can think that God will punish sin
With hell's eternal pains.

It is the Gospel we uphold,
The Law condemns, we know,
But Christ has stopp'd its snarling mouth
A thousand years ago.

'T is out of date, we hate its noise,
It ever would us sting ;
Therefore, forsooth, we cast it forth,
As far as we can fling.

For who can bear its galling yoke,
Or wear its heavy chain ?
We wish for ease, ourselves to please,
And some unrighteous gain.

The road, we trust, is vastly broad,
That leads where Jesus dwells,
And knaves and rogues go hand in hand,
To grace those sparkling hills.

But stay, thou hasty, rattling pen,
Be careful how you rave ;
You fight the great, the men of state,
The knowing and the brave.

The Universalists believe
Regenerating power,
That all return, repent and mourn,
In God's appointed hour.

But do n't the preachers of this plan
Have a delusive call ;
Emerging straight from the black gate
Of hell's infernal hall ?

Who say to men, Ye shall not die ;
No sinner will be lost ;
The devil was sent to make men sin,
And Christ to pay all cost.

That though men serve the devil and lust,
They will, with one accord,
When tired and done with such sweet fun,
Run panting to the Lord.

Alas ! can bold, presumptuous souls,
For pard'ning mercy look,
Who perish in the act of sin,
By some immediate stroke ?

Are pardons granted after death ?
Did Christ such tidings bring ?
Can men who die, or angels high,
By Scripture prove the thing ?

O yes, indeed ! such will be saved,
Salvation's door is wide ;
This golden plan takes every man,
For Christ for all has died.

And all who fall by suicide
Are wise beyond compare !
They spill their blood and fly to God,
And reign eternal there.

King Pharaoh and his mighty host
Had Godlike honors given ;
A pleasant breeze brought them with ease,
By water unto heaven.

But still the chosen of the Lord
Through drought and danger drags ;
They live in fears full forty years,
Curst with a thousand plagues.

And yet, poor fools, they loudly sing,
When they had passed the flood,
Where their blessed foes forsook all woes,
To walk in bliss with God.

So all the filthy Sodomites,
When God bade Lot retire,
Went in a trice to Paradise,
On rapid wings of fire.

And there, impure, they rest on high,
For Jesus came to save ;
But righteous Lot must take his scot
Within a stinking cave.

But did not Sodom's crimes pull down
God's vengeance from above ?
Can flaming wrath, freighted with death,
Bestow eternal love ?

O yes ! God saw them all in sin,
And sent that dreadful storm,
To bring them straight to heaven's height,
Their manners to reform.

And when the murmuring, marching tribes
Required a dainty dish,
And food was sent around each tent,
Well suited to their wish —

God kindly sent the raging plague,
Which brought the lustful brood
To Zion's hill, their souls to fill
With heaven's choicest food.

And thousands more made speedy flight,
As we from Scripture hear,
To gormandize above the skies,
Because they worshipped Peor.

Proud Korah, with his factious club,
Whom hell thought to devour,
By crafty slip, took nimble trip
To heaven's lofty tower :

And when the filthy Canaanites
To Joshua's host were given,
The sun stood still, so they might kill,
And send them off to heaven.

God saw those villains were too bad
To own that fruitful land ;
He therefore took the rascals up,
To dwell at his right hand.

So Jabin's army, coming forth
With Deborah's host to fight,
By heaven's wrath, were blest with death,
And raised to realms of light.

The hardened thief upon the cross,
Mocking the Saviour there,
Went with him through the ether blue,
And in his glories share.

The sin against the Holy Ghost,
Which Jesus did declare
Still unforgiven in earth or heaven,
Was nothing but to scare.

For Ananias and his wife
Soon reached the starry throne,
When they in pride had loudly lied
Unto that Sacred One.

And Judas, that perfidious wretch,
Was not for crimes accurst ;
He by a cord outwent his Lord,
And got to heaven first.

But he was branded with a woe,
And better ne'er been born ;
Tush, this mock woe, but let him know
That grace would him adorn.

Paul's fabulous catalogue of crimes,
Which in his works is found,
Placed there to make the fearful quake,
Will never kill nor wound.

For God 's flung by one attribute ;
His justice he abates ;
And criminals, continuing such,
May enter heaven's gates.

Yea, and in fact strict holiness
Does not with him abide,
For the unholy and impure
Are seated by his side.

Yes, every vile, abandoned wretch,
Beneath the spacious sky,
Who dieth in the act of sin,
Shall reign with God on high.

There saint and devil, good and bad,
Will mingle in the crowd ;
Hail sprites well met, but hell-hounds set
To praise the Lord aloud.

O dreadful stuff, insanity
Has took the wretched man :
Well, then I wot that he has got
The Universal Plan.

But can the well-informéd mind,
Upon a dying bed,
Conscious of sin long livéd in,
With such strange stuff be fed ?

Can he, in that distressing hour,
Have hope to enter heaven,
While all impure, still unrenewed,
And not a sin forgiven ?

Will he not beg forgiving grace ?

Can he this business wave ?

Will he expect a pardoning act,

Beyond the silent grave ?

To save his people from their sins,

The blesséd Jesus came ;

This charming prop supports the hope

Of all who love his name.

But there 's no pardon after death ;

'T is not the Saviour's will ;

Then the unholy and impure

Must be unholy still :

For heaven itself would be defiled ;

God's throne a filthy place ;

If sinners were admitted there,

Devoid of cleansing grace.

Æsau repented when too late,

To his amazing cost,

And millions since, through negligence,

Have heaven's glory lost.

Then let us now repair to Christ,
While hours of grace endure,
(Our time doth fly, we soon must die,)
His blessing to secure.

For there will be a solemn day,
When all the dead must rise ;
When rich and poor must stand before
A throne fixed in the skies.

When a division will be made,
By God, who dwells in light ;
When some must stand at his left hand,
And others at his right.

When he will bring the right hand ones
To walk celestial plains ;
When he will frown the left ones down,
To suffer endless pains.

But O ! (say some) you much mistake,
For only sin is curst ;
The Lord saves all, both great and small,
Even the very worst,

Well, if their sins are sent to hell,
 Their graces go to heaven ;
Such a decision to this position,
 I trust may well be given.

For come ye blest, and go ye curst,
 Are drest in equal plight ;
If sin is sent to punishment,
 Then grace must take its flight.

What will the naked millions do —
 Can any mortal tell —
When, strippéd bare, unfit they are
 For heaven or for hell ?

Their sins are gone, their graces too ;
 Well may they loudly call
To mountains high, and rocks near by,
 Upon their heads to fall.

But there 's another class cries out,
 O, poor, conceited man ;
He runs in haste to fire his blast,
 Before he knows our plan.

For we believe God's heavy wrath
Will surely come on all,
Who do n't espouse his righteous cause,
Nor mind the Spirit's call.

When he doth try men all their days,
It may be sixty years,
For to convert their stony hearts,
And no good change appears :

Yea, when he tries them many ways,
By mercies rich and large ;
E'en by his word and by his rod,
And sin gets no discharge :

Then growing weary of his work,
And much discouraged too,
He gives them over to the devil,
To see what he can do.

The devil drags them down to hell,
Where every woe appears,
And damns them there, beyond compare,
Perhaps a thousand years.

Well now in truth, they much repent,
And long for to depart,
And dwell at rest among the blest —
They have a broken heart.

Their dross is all burnt up in hell,
The devil 's done the chore :
He 's qualified them for to dwell
In heaven forevermore.

Therefore with joy they now arise,
Meanwhile a lucid train
Do guard them thro' heaven's curtains blue,
To Zion's pleasant plain.

And there they walk elysium fields,
Among ambrosial flowers ;
'T is there we wist they swim in bliss,
And rest in florid bowers.

O ! shocking scheme, delusive plan,
Here 's a tartareon's task ;
The blackest art hell can impart,
The devil without a mask :

For this blasphemes the mighty God,
Who heaven and earth has made ;
It speaks him small and trivial,
As needing Satan's aid.

This robs him of his attributes,
His wisdom, truth, and power,
And gives them over to the devil,
Who seeketh to devour.

That God doth need the devil's power,
It is a delusive plan ;
It ne'er was told till a late hour,
By any mortal man.

Let all take care, be on their guard,
The devil oft beguiles ;
He leads men on in error's path,
And kills them by his wiles.

But still, perhaps some men may say,
The mark he yet doth miss ;
It is their punishment in hell
Entitles them to bliss.

For there they answer law's demands,
And then come out of hell ;
As men, forsooth, by law come forth,
When they swear out of jail.

And now, indeed, they shout aloud,
Their Jubilee is come ;
They shall arise from pains to joys,
For God doth call them home.

What ! enter heaven just as they were
When they went down to hell ?
While stained with sin, can they go in
That holy place to dwell ?

What ! all impure, still unrenewed,
And filthy as the beasts ?
What ! naked souls and graceless fools
Ascend to heaven's rest ?

What ! saved without true holiness
Or trusting in Christ's name ?
Can darkness shine in light divine,
Or give a radiant flame ?

If men can buy eternal rest
By temporary pain,
Then Christ our Lord has shed his blood,
For Adam's sons, in vain.

We read no other name is given —
For men were all undone —
By which poor sinners can be saved,
But God's beloved Son.

Besure, the Scriptures all agree,
And join with one accord,
That none, without true holiness,
Shall ever see the Lord.

And is there holiness in hell, —
Does sanctity dwell there?
From evil thoughts and filthy words
Do they keep wholly clear?

What have they there to keep them free
From sin, that dreadful evil,
(Which they could not forsake while here,)
Beside the raging devil?

All sinners shall ascend to heaven,
As some great critics tell ;
But why are some brought quickly there,
And others sent to hell ?

Why are some guilty sinners changed,
By God's all powerful grace,
And others sent to punishment,
In that tormenting place ?

But should they sin while they lie there,
(They will, by what appears,)
Then they must dwell in that dark hell,
Throughout eternal years.

For though they fry in torments there,
To pay the mighty score,
Yet sinning, they keep up the debt,
Or add unto it more.

But could they justice pay its due,
By roasting in the fire,
And then arise above the skies,
To hail the harping choir —

How can they join with Christian saints,
The Saviour's love to tell ?
He did not cleanse them with his blood,
For they came there by hell.

We read, the joyful songs of saints
Are unto Jesus given ;
Because he bought them with his blood,
And made them fit for heaven.

But here we see a smoky club,
The devil with all his gains ;
And can they rest among the blest,
Where God exalted reigns ?

They were opposed to God, while here ;
For Christ they had no love ;
Truth they defied, in sin they died,
And can they rest above ?

Where were they cleanséd from their sin ?
They spurned the Saviour's blood :
Can death and hell fit them to dwell
With the most holy GOD ?

The devil knows 't is but a lie,
That grace in hell is given ;
That men come there for to prepare
And qualify for heaven.

The flames of the eternal gulf,
With all the horrors there,
Will never buy a place on high,
As Dives can declare.

We know that some are born of God,
And grace doth them inspire ;
But those who are new-born in hell,
Are surely born of fire :

Which fire, still burning fierce and keen,
Is called the second death ;
For here indeed is felt and seen
Jehovah's heated wrath.

Here the Almighty will increase
The lashes of his rod,
Nor will their fiery torments cease,
So long as he is God.

But could the devil get heaven again,
With all his plaguy crew,
Though God be there, and all is fair,
He may his war renew.

He once made war in heaven, we know,
And fought with all his power,
But was outdone when he begun,
And banished that high tower.

He tempted Christ to worship him,
When wealth he did propound ;
But hearing truth from Jesus' mouth,
He vanished at the sound.

He tempted Job to curse his God,
When ulcers on him grew ;
He drove away his herds and flocks,
And sons and daughters slew.

And now, like a ferocious beast,
He takes his daily tour,
Beneath the sky, with watchful eye,
In order to devour.

In errors path he hath his walk,
And with malignant breath,
He doth intoxicate and sting
A thousand souls to death.

Be not deceived, for if you die
Ere you to God return,
The vengeance of eternal fire
Will endless on you burn.

Thou shalt not die, came from the devil ;
This plan was hatched in hell ;
It spread with power in Eden's bower,
And man before it fell.

This flung him out of Paradise ;
How dreadful was the wound ;
It made him sigh and groan and die,
And rot beneath the ground.

This wounded all the human race ;
Hence man's corruption flows ;
Fearless of God, he likes the road
That leads to endless woes.

This spread destruction far and wide,
Through nature's boundless plains ;
The creatures groan beneath a frown,
And death triumphant reigns.

This set the elements at war ;
Spread poison in the air ;
While sea and earth contend in wrath,
And burning lightnings glare.

But who can scan the heavy woes,
Or mete the judgments out —
The plagues and wrath, the wars and death,
Hell's plot has brought about.

'T was this unstrung the angels' harps,
Until the golden plan
To them was known, before the throne,
That Christ should die for man.

For this did cost our Saviour's death ;
But death his power reveals ;
For he arose, in spite of foes,
To Zion's sparkling hills.

There he asserts his orient throne ;
Hell trembles at his frown ;
He loves his saints, he knows their wants,
His glories will them crown.

For he will bring them home to joy,
Where they shall ever reign ;
But all the wicked he 'll destroy,
In darkness, fire, and pain.

My friends, would you avoid God's wrath,
Where'er you go or dwell ;
And fiercer ire, which burns like fire,
In the eternal hell ?

Would you your names immortalize,
Among celestial choirs,
And have them sound where songs go round,
On angels' golden lyres ?

Would you maintain a walk with God,
In robes divinely fair ;
And die to rest among the blest ?
Keep from this dev'lish snare.

HAPPY END OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

How calm and happy is the death
Of one in Christ who dies ;
In peace and hope he yields his breath,
And unto Jesus flies.

Through death's dark vale he takes his flight,
While angels guard his way,
And soon doth reach eternal light,
The blaze of endless day.

But who can tell what rising joys,
And blissful torrents roll,
With new delights and sweet surprise,
On his all-ravished soul.

There does he give his noble song,
In robes of glory drest ;
While Jesus sounds on every tongue,
And gladdens every breast.

Glory succeeds his former grief,
On Zion's blissful plains ;
The crosses of his dying life
Are changed for endless gains.

Sickness and death no more are known,
All woes forever fled ;
Rivers of life glide near the throne,
From heaven's pure Fountain-head.

Nor long shall death his spoil retain,
Within his iron arms ;
His mouldering dust shall rise again,
Drest in a thousand charms.

Before his glory shining bright —
The glory of his frame —
The source of day, so full of light,
Doth give a paler flame,

The resurrection morn will bring
His truly great desire,
For he will fly upon the wing,
And join the harping choir.

Now he shall see as he is seen,
And know as he is known ;
Now he has on his garments clean,
Before the golden throne.

A robe of spotless righteousness,
Which doth for sin atone ;
A robe outshining angels' dress,
Though they stand near the throne.

This garment — O how dazzling bright,
More rich than golden ore ;
Won by the great Redeemer's fight,
The purchase of his gore.

An angel's tongue cannot express
Its worth, nor tell how fair ;
And this alone must be the dress,
To speak my entrance there.

Thus drest, he stands secure with God,
In that tremendous hour,
When Nature's frame doth quake and nod,
And sink beneath his power.

Thus drest, he sits upon the throne
Where millions give their songs,
Where golden ages still begun,
Rejoice the raptured throngs.

THE PROSPERITY AND DEATH OF
THE RICH MAN,

SPOKEN OF IN ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL, CHAP. XVI.

Behold the man, whose wealth was great,
His clothing fine and red ;
He dwelt at ease within his gate,
On sumptuous fare he fed.

His fruitful gardens and his farms
Yielded a mighty store ;
His crowded barns the miser charms, —
He goes to building more.

And said unto his graceless soul,
Eat, drink, and take thine ease,
For wealth and pleasures on thee roll,
As billows on the seas.

But God, his Maker, said, Thou fool,
I will cut short thy day ;
This night will I require thy soul,
And thou shalt pass away.

Death flies to do his business well,
Gives him a deadly wound,
While the infernal troops from hell
The frightened wretch surround.

His soul now leaves its filthy clay,
Ascends the starry coasts,
But soon is given for a prey
To black, infernal ghosts :

And dragged where waves of vengeance roll
In a tempestuous hell,
Where guilty, never-dying souls
Shall living tortures feel.

Now there the wretched worldling lies ;
His pleasures drew his love ;
In torments he lifts up his eyes,
And views the saints above.

A gulf is fixed, he can't come there,
He in those flames must lie,
And wrath shall feed his keen despair,
Through all eternity.

Lord, wean my heart from worldly toys,
And wash my sins away,
That when death comes my soul may rise
To realms of endless day.

THOUGHTS ON UNIVERSALISM.

BY A DIFFERENT AUTHOR.

'T is strange that men of sense and reason
Should execute such horrid treason

Against the King of heaven :

They seek to find ten thousand ways

To rob Jehovah of his praise,

Nor ask to be forgiven.

The pure, good, wise, and Great First Cause
Created man, and gave him laws,

To be the rule of life ;

But he from laws and love did go,

And chose the crooked path of woe,

Which leads to wretched strife.

But man was built upright and pure,
Why did he not remain secure
From such a wretched choice ?
Because the old Serpent, quick and sly,
Came forth and gave our God the lie,
And man believed his voice.

And ever since that falling hour,
The devils exercise their power,
To lead mankind aside ;
And man, as selfish as an elf,
Doth study still to serve himself,
And trusts upon his pride.

Satan and self, and lust and pride,
Each evil principle beside,
All in one plot combine ;
When ignorance fails they 'll doctrine try,
And turn the truth into a lie,
Or read but half a line.

And when old-fashioned error failed,
There was a potent council held

’Mongst all the powers of sin ;
They studied for some dreadful plan,
To catch the precious soul of man,
And thus they did begin : —

‘ What shall we do?—our plans prove vague ;
There are a few foresee the plague,
And hide from every gin ;
Go to, we ’ll try some grand design,
Which shall appear to man divine, —
Dress some religious sin.’

Thus raising all the powers of hell,
They rumaged all the noisome cell,
To search some doctrine out ;
Then Satan raised his curséd head,
And with a hellish joy he said,
‘ I ’ve found a plan, no doubt,

‘ Go, turn the Bible all about,
Prove an enticing doctrine out,
That all mankind are saved ;
Say there ’s no danger, all is well,
And tell the sinner there ’s no hell,
For him, beyond the grave :

‘ Go tell him live just as he list,
And not one single sin resist,
For God decreed the same ;
Go say that God created sin,
And man is only a machine,
Which cannot bear the blame.’

Thus they conceived a dreadful plan,
Well suited to the pride of man,
Who soon agreed to that ;
And now they preach it o’er the land,
And O ! what progress they have gained,
To bring poor souls to fate.

'T was from the black, infernal pit,
With Satan at the head of it,
And legions close behind ;
With lies, deceit, and fire and smoke,
Each conscience they would sear and choke,
Till it was dumb and blind.

But let each living mortal know
This doctrine leads to endless woe,
Therefore he must take care,
Least that the light he hath within
Be nought but darkness, guilt, and sin,
Which leads to black despair.

At variance with himself, can He —
Can the Almighty ever be ?
If so, he soon must fall ;
If God to man has trespass given,
All vice and malice came from heaven,
And there 's no sin at all.

Now hear what Christ himself did say —
That on the resurrection day,
 Some shall appear to life ;
But others, who have evil done,
Shall go away to damnation —
 Yea, all the sons of strife.

Except your righteousness exceed
That of the Pharisee's, indeed,
 Ye shall not enter heaven.
Again — thus saith the Lord of Hosts —
The sin against the Holy Ghost
 Shall never be forgiven.

Again 't is said, Depart from me,
Ye workers of iniquity —
 'T is not, Ye works depart —
But ye, who work iniquity,
Ye wicked ones, depart from me,
 Eternally depart.

If all alike are to be blest,
How could it be for Judas best,
 If he had ne'er been made ?
How can it in the judgment be,
More tolerable for Tyre than thee,
 As Christ himself hath said ?

He who believes shall be made just,
He who believes not shall be curst
 With God's eternal frown ;
When once you 're in the prison laid,
You 'll not come out till you have paid
 The utmost farthing down.

Did not our Lord declare to some,
That ' Where I am ye cannot come,'
 E'en all who die in sin ?
A gulf 's between Dives and heaven,
He cannot pass, nor be forgiven,
 But there in flames remain.

Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord,
Shall e'er receive a saint's reward,
But he who doth God's will.
Heaven is so pure, that what 's unclean
Will be debarred from entering in —
Let them remain so still.

Think, O ! ye wolves, in form of men,
Who preach the hell-redemption plan,
Our Lord declared to some,
There was a sin they ought to fear,
Which should not be forgiven here,
Nor in the world to come.

Nought but the blood of Christ alone
Can for the sins of men atone,
Or pay that dreadful debt ;
Not all the suffering that can be
Endured through all eternity,
Can e'er diminish it.

My friends, I beg, with all my heart,
That you would not the truth pervert,
Nor here its force evade ;
The Scriptures do our creed contain,
In characters as fair and plain,
As ever limner made.



THE SINNER'S MISTAKE.

BY ISAAC WATTS.

Laugh, ye profane, and swell and burst
With bold impiety ;
Yet shall ye live forever cursed,
And seek in vain to die.

The gasp of your expiring breath
Consigns your soul to chains,
By the last agonies of death,
Sent down to fiercer pains.

Ye stand upon a dreadful steep,
And all beneath is hell ;
Your weighty guilt will sink you deep,
Where the old serpent fell.

When iron slumbers bind your flesh,
With strange surprise, you 'll find
Immortal vigor spring afresh,
And tortures wake the mind !

Then you 'll confess the frightful names
Of plagues you scorned before,
No more shall look like idle dreams,
Like foolish tales no more.

Then shall ye curse that fatal day,
(With flames upon your tongues,)
When you exchanged your souls away
For vanity and songs.

Behold the saints rejoice to die,
For heaven shines round their heads ;
And angel-guards, prepared to fly,
Attend their fainting beds.

Their longing spirits part, and rise
To their celestial seat ;
Above these ruinable skies
They make their last retreat.

Hence, ye profane, I hate your ways,
I walk with pious souls ;
There 's a wide difference in our race,
And distant are our goals.



THE LAW AND GOSPEL.

BY ISAAC WATTS.



‘Curst be the man, forever curst,
‘That doth one wilful sin commit ;
‘Death and damnation for the first,
‘Without relief, and infinite.’

Thus Sinai roars ; and round the earth
Thunder and fire, and vengeance flings ;
But, Jesus, thy dear gasping breath,
And Calvary, say gentler things.

‘ Pardon, and grace, and boundless love,
‘ Streaming along a Saviour’s blood,
‘ And life, and joys, and crowns above,
‘ Dear-purchased by a bleeding God.’

Hark ! how he prays, (the charming sound
Dwells on his dying lips,) ‘ Forgive !’
And every groan, and gaping wound,
Cries, ‘ Father, let the rebels live.’

Go, you that rest upon the law,
And toil, and seek salvation there,
Look to the flames that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble, and despair.

But I ’ll retire beneath the cross ;
Saviour, at thy dear feet I lie ;
And the keen sword that justice draws,
Flaming and red, shall pass me by.



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